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Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's

The Inside News of PR & Marketing Communications



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## GENERAL MOTORS DRIVES AWAY FROM TENEO

General Motors has dropped Teneo as its PR counselor following news that its CEO & co-founder, Declan Kelly, was inebriated at a Global Citizen event in May and engaged in inappropriate behavior.



**Declan Kelly**

A spokesperson for the automaker said June 25 that following a series of discussions it decided not to continue working with Teneo.

GM is the first major client to cut Teneo since the *Financial Times* broke news of Kelly's misbehavior on June 24. Kelly had been advising GM CEO Mary Barra.

Global Citizen, which booted Kelly from its board following the May 2 charity event, also severed ties with the PR firm that serves blue-chip companies such as Dow Chemical, Coca-Cola, Delta Air Lines and General Electric, as well as Saudi Arabia.

Kelly, who is undergoing counseling, has relinquished some of his managerial duties at Teneo.

Prior to launching Teneo, Kelly was the US State Dept.'s special envoy to Northern Ireland, US CEO of Financial Dynamics and executive VP at FTI Consulting.

## LLYC SLATES IPO

LLYC plans to go public via a stock offering on the Spanish stock market, a transaction that is expected to raise about \$12M.



**José Antonio Llorente**

Founding partner Jose Antonio Llorente said the proceeds will bankroll LLYC's strategy, which is geared to expanding high-tech offerings; making acquisitions to differentiate it from competitors; establishing alliances to bolster geographic reach; and driving organic growth.

The offering will project the Madrid-based firm further on its path of becoming one of "the main communications, public affairs and marketing consulting firms on the international stage," according to Llorente.

LLYC has US offices in Miami, DC and New York and 14 outposts in Latin America.

*The O'Dwyer's newsletter will not be published the week of July 4. The next edition will appear on July 12.*

## MDC PUTS OFF STAGWELL MERGER MEETING

MDC Partners has adjourned its June 22 special meeting of shareholders to vote on its combination with Mark Penn's Stagwell Media LP until July 19.

Shareholders now have until July 15 to weigh in on the deal that is opposed by Indaba Capital Management, MDC's largest independent stockholder, which criticized the transaction as a "conflict-riddled and poorly structured merger."

The San Francisco hedge fund owns about 15 percent of MDC's shares.

Penn, who also helms MDC, claims the merger will create a "transformative global marketing network" blessed with "best-in-class capabilities."

He says the Stagwell/MDC mash-up will be "the first platform in 50 years ready to take on the 'big four' that dominate the industry."

MDC is the home of PR firms [Allison+Partners](#), [Hunter and KWT Global](#), while Stagwell owns [Sloane & Co](#) and SKDKnickerbocker.



**Mark Penn**

## SARASOTA SEEKS TOURISM PR PITCHES

Visit Sarasota County, the authority providing visitor and tourism information for Southwest Florida's Sarasota County, is seeking proposals from firms providing public relations services.



VSC is looking for an agency that can garner positive publicity for Sarasota County and promote it as a must-experience tourism destination.

Scope of work includes: distributing press releases; pitching and building relationships with the major travel media (including broadcast, podcasts, print and online, as well as social media/influencers); securing press trips; media monitoring; arranging media missions and blitzes with media for VSC staff in key markets; assist in planning, creation and development of public relations campaigns with strategic interactions with paid media; and assisting in writing and compiling travel and tourism industry award submissions.

The contract will run from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022, with a budget ranging from \$80,000 to \$90,000.

Proposals are due by 12 p.m. on July 9 and should be emailed to vice president Erin Duggan at [EDuggan@VisitSarasota.org](mailto:EDuggan@VisitSarasota.org).

[Download the RFQ \(PDF\).](#)

## **BRUNSWICK, SVC, TRIDENT TOP CHAMBERS' LIST**

Brunswick Group, [Sard Verbinnen & Co.](#) and Trident DMG were named the top PR & communications firms offering litigation support in this year's rankings from Chambers.



All three were placed in Band 1, the top tier of the rankings, which evaluate firms based on technical legal ability, professional conduct, client service, commercial astuteness, diligence and commitment. They all were in Band 1 last year as well.

[Ripp Media](#), Finsbury Glover Hering and [FTI Consulting](#) took spots in the Band 2 category. Band 3 includes PRC Haggerty, [Reevemark](#), [Sitrick And Company](#), The Levinson Group, [Edelman](#) and [Infinite Global](#).

Lanny Davis of Trident DMG and Sitrick And Company's Mike Sitrick were named Senior Statespeople in Chambers' individual rankings. Ellen Moskowitz of Brunswick Group placed in Band 1, while Ripp Media's Allan Ripp, SVC's George Sard and Paul Holmes of FGH were in Band 2.

[See the complete list of ranked firms and individuals.](#)

## **'EV-FRIENDLY' SAN ANTONIO SEEKS PR BOOST**

San Antonio's Office of Sustainability wants a firm to run a public information campaign to get the word out about its "EVSA, Electric Vehicles San Antonio" brand.

EVSA unifies the city's infrastructure, policies and programming to promote electric transportation in an inclusive fashion to all residents of the city.

The Office is looking for a PR partner to conduct surveys, create collateral material, handle outreach to traditional and social media channels.

The PR push should highlight the Office's partnership with Blink Charging, which is installing chargers on SA-owned property. That effort will increase access to charging stations, especially in historically underserved areas.

The Office has budgeted \$90K for a three-year campaign. After the first year, there is a potential for two one-year renewal options.

Responses to the RFQ, due July 7, must be submitted electronically via the San Antonio e-Procurement System (SAePS).

[Read the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

## **GOODE TAKES PR/SOCIAL IMPACT POST AT BMO**

Kimberley Goode has signed on as chief communications and social impact officer at BMO Financial Group, which is North America's eighth-largest bank with \$950B in assets. She will join the Toronto-headquartered bank in August.



**Kimberley Goode**

Most recently, Goode was at Blue Shield of California, where she was senior VP of external affairs. She previously served as VP, communications and corporate affairs at Northwestern Mutual.

At BMO, Goode will lead a new team combining the communications practice areas of employee communications, media relations, and government relations with the purpose and community giving teams.

BMO was founded in 1817 as the Bank of Montreal.

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

[Prosek Partners](#) acquires a stake in [Blue Dot Capital](#), a boutique sustainable finance consulting firm with expertise and experience in advising investment-management firms on developing comprehensive ESG and impact investing capabilities. The combination of the two firms, which have been working together for close to two years, will allow them to offer a full spectrum of ESG advisory services encompassing ESG policy, governance, integration, investment strategy, reporting, investor relations, narrative-building, and strategic marketing and communications.



[Qwoted](#), a platform that uses AI to connect the media with matching sources and PR pros, closes a \$3 million Series Seed round of funding. Prosek Venture Partners and [Vested](#), both pre-seed investors in the platform, are part of this round of funding, along with a consortium of communications firms including Integral, Caliber Corporate Advisers, Haymaker PR, FHS Partners and Red Lab. Qwoted plans to use this investment to enhance its technology capabilities and add talent to its sales, marketing and media success teams.

[Praytell](#) teams up with insight and strategy firm Kelt-on Global to produce its 2021 [Optimism Index](#). The index assesses sentiment from 250 U.S. respondents who have decision-making authority in marketing roles to find out their motivations and the outcomes they're seeing. The index finds that almost nine out of ten respondents (88 percent) want to see more positive messaging in ads. The agency is also launching Praytell Advance, a reputation practice led by chief reputation officer Adam Warrington, who joined the agency in February 2021 from Anheuser-Busch.

[Allison+Partners](#) is launching a Miami office, the thirteenth US office in its global network. David Baum, executive VP of corporate communications & technology, leads the office, which will focus on corporate communications, blockchain, cryptocurrencies and emerging technologies. Allison+Partners global chairman Scott Allison said the Miami office will serve as a gateway to Latin America for the firm.

[Crowe PR](#) teams up with youth-led digital wellness nonprofit [#HalfTheStory](#). The agency will provide the organization with public relations services to help generate awareness of their mission to empower the next generation's relationship with technology through advocacy, education and research. Since launching in 2016, [#HalfTheStory](#) has spread the mission of empowering authentic storytelling and healthy digital habits to a community of over 30,000 teens in 99 countries around the world.



[MSL](#) and [Onclusive](#) expand their partnership, which will bring Onclusive's trademarked PR Attribution system to all MSL clients. The platform, which is currently being used by MSL's U.S. clients, will now be available to current and new MSL and Publicis Groups clients globally. PR Attribution links individual articles and pieces of content to specific business outcomes, employing an AI-driven data set and trained machine learning models. Insights delivered by the platform include: the total volume of company website visits from earned and owned media; the projected revenue of individual pieces of content; and trended statistics by communications campaign, message or topic.

## **FALFURRIAS TAKES MAJORITY STAKE IN HPS**

Falfurrias Capital Partners has acquired a majority stake in Hamilton Place Strategies, the DC lobbying firm launched by former George W. Bush administration veterans Tony Fratto and Stuart Siciliano.



With the investment, HPS and its Flag Media Analytics unit will merge with FCP's Ballast Research operation.

Fratto, who was assistant press secretary at the White House, said Ballast "brings unmatched data and insights to understanding issues and the impact of advocacy on policy making" to HPS.

Alex Jutkowitz, Ballast executive chairman and former US CEO at Hill+Knowlton, will chair the new venture.

He said the new platform will provide CEOs a new depth of understanding of issues and strategy required to deal with increased public scrutiny and demands for accountability.

Charlotte-based FCP is the firm of former BankAmerica CEO Hugh McColl and CFO Marc Oken.

## **H+K PUTS PR SHINE ON INDIA'S GEMS, JEWELS**

Hill+Knowlton Strategies is working with India's Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council on a communications program to bolster the sale of the country's gold, diamonds and gemstones in the US.

The WPP unit has a \$135K nine-month contract that runs through the end of the year. Its services include creation of a content hub, media relations and account management.

H+K also will be responsible for an influencer program, which includes outreach, coordination of loaning and managing payments.

The firm's nine-member GJEPC team includes Laura Morgan, executive VP & head of consumer markets; Tyler Kenny, US influencer lead; and Colin Smillie, VP-digital & social media engagement services.

India accounts for 5.8 percent of the global export market. Its top markets are the US, Hong Kong and UAE.

Colin Shah, GJEPC chairman, is hopeful that government support and increased trade show activity will "further enhance the morale of India's manufacturers and traders and boost their export activity."

## **ONE NINE THREE BACKS KRISPY KREME'S IPO**

The One Nine Three Group is handling Krispy Kreme as the doughnut chain plans to return to public ownership by selling four million shares of stock priced in the \$21 to \$24 range.

Krispy, which aspires to be "the most loved sweet treat in the world," sold 1.3B doughnuts, 64 percent of which were of the original glazed variety, in 30 countries during fiscal 2020.

Despite selling a billion-plus doughnuts, Krispy could not turn a profit, losing \$64.3M on \$1.1B sales. The red ink continued into fiscal 2121 as Krispy suffered a \$3.1M loss on \$313M revenues during Q1 ended April 4.



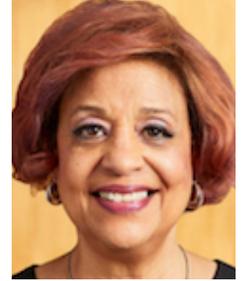
JAB Holding took Krispy private in 2016 after it bought the company for \$1.4B. Following Krispy's IPO, JAB

will retain a 38.6 percent stake in the company.

The One Nine Three Group's Zach Siegel handles media for Krispy's IPO and Tristan Peniston-Bird deals with the investment community.

## **ON THE MOVE**

**Interpublic Group** appoints **Heide Gardner** global culture officer, a newly created position, effective Aug. 1. Gardner, who joined IPG in 2003, currently serves as senior vice president, chief diversity and inclusion officer. In her new position, she will take a leadership role in shaping the company's strategic, long-term vision on a broad range of social justice issues and well-being for underserved and under-represented communities, and ways in which the company can engage with its clients and partners on these issues to achieve sustainable business goals. "Her ability to foster far-reaching collaborative relationships has made a mark not only within our sector, but also within the broader business community," said IPG chief executive officer Philippe Krakowsky.



**Heide Gardner**

**Zapwater Communications** promotes Jennifer Lake to executive vice president. Lake joined Zapwater in 2010 as creative director and was subsequently promoted to vice president and senior vice president. As a member of the agency's senior management team, she will continue to lead new business development and marketing efforts at the agency, as well as remaining involved in account management and leading the onboarding of all new clients. "Jenn's experience combined with her loyalty and dedication to the principles and values that are so important to our agency are just a few of the reasons Zapwater is blessed to have her as part of our executive team," said Zapwater CEO David Zapata.

**BMF** hires **Ty Bentsen** as head of business development. Bentsen comes to BMF from The Brandman Agency, where she served as managing director, global strategy. She was previously a senior account supervisor at Wagstaff Worldwide Public Relations. In her new post, Bentsen will oversee business development across BMF's three key practice areas—earned (PR), engagement (digital/social), and experience (activations/events). She will be based in Los Angeles.

**TSG Consumer Partners**, a private equity firm, hires **David Anderson** as managing director, investor relations. Anderson joins TSG from Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company, where he was senior portfolio manager. He previously served as a senior investment officer at the New York State Common Retirement Fund. Based in New York, Anderson will be responsible for maintaining and building TSG's relationships with current and prospective investors, consultants and their advisors.



**David Anderson**

**Albright Stonebridge Group**, a global strategy firm that is part of Dentons Global Advisors, adds former US ambassador to Mexico **Roberta Jacobson** and former prime minister of Peru **Roberto Dañino** as senior advisors in its Americas practice. Jacobson was also a senior advisor at ASG from 2018 to 2020. She most recently served as special assistant to president Biden and coordinator for the Southwest border on the National Security Council. Dañino was Peru's prime minister from 2001 to 2002, and subsequently served as the country's ambassador to the United States. He has also been senior vice president and general counsel of the World Bank.

## **AGENCY NEEDED TO ‘TAKE CARE OF TEXAS’**

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the agency charged with protecting environmental resources in the Lone Star State, is looking for an agency that can develop a marketing plan.



The TCEQ needs an agency to develop outreach and media campaigns in support of its “Take Care of Texas Marketing Plan,” which is meant to raise awareness among Texans regarding the personal steps they can take to conserve water and

energy, keep air and water clean and reduce waste.

Scope of work includes producing a marketing plan and subsequent outreach and media promotions; production and editing of a Public Service Announcement to air on digital media channels; developing an advertising plan to promote the PSA, focusing on social media and digital advertisements; and securing placement on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube as well as on Texas-based websites.

Terms of the contract run for two years, beginning on Sept. 1 and ending on August 31, 2023, with the option to renew for three additional one-year terms.

Deadline for proposals is 3 p.m. (CST) on July 7. Proposals should be sent via email (in PDF format) to: [Procurements&Contracts@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Procurements&Contracts@tceq.texas.gov).

[Download the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## **BLUESHIRT WORKS BUZZFEED’S SPAC**

The Blueshirt Group handles BuzzFeed as it plans to merge with 890 Fifth Avenue Partners blank check firm and become public in a deal valued at \$1.5B.

The SPAC has \$288M in cash and \$150M in convertible note financing led by Redwood Capital Management,

Buzzfeed plans to use the cash to acquire Complex Network—a streetwear, fashion, food, music and pop culture platform aimed at millennials and Gen Zers—from Hearst and Verizon. The Complex deal is worth \$300M—\$200M in cash and \$100M in equity.

The digital media company believes the addition of the Complex brands better positions it “to thrive in the age of media consolidation.”

Adam Rothstein, executive chairman of 890, and Greg Coleman, ex-Buzzfeed president and advisor to 890, will join BuzzFeed’s board of directors.

Britain’s Next Fifteen Communications Group owns Blueshirt.

## **ALLISON+PARTNERS ADDS YOHO AIDE**

[Allison+Partners](#) has hired Brian Kaveney as vice president, global reputation risk + public affairs. Kaveney was most recently communications director for Rep. Ted Yoho



**Brian Kaveney**

(R-FL), who retired from the House earlier this year. Before that, he was communications director for Rep. Dan Lungren (R-CA).

Kaveney’s focus will be on public affairs, issues management and crisis response for clients including those with mandates that involve working with elected officials. He will report to Barbara Laidlaw, partner and head of global reputation risk + public affairs.

## **COMMUNICATORS OK PANDEMIC OUTREACH**

Seven out of 10 communications professionals are satisfied with their organization’s outreach and management policies during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new study conducted by the University of Alabama’s Plank Center for Leadership in Communications.

The Center’s 2020-21 [North American Communication Monitor](#) surveyed 1,046 communication professionals from the U.S. and Canada on topics including ethical challenges, cybersecurity, gender equality, salaries and competency development.

The satisfaction level is much higher for older workers. For all over-40 age groups, at least three quarters said they were satisfied with their organization’s performance. That number drops to 67.5 percent for those from 30 to 39, and 51.9 percent for those 29 or younger.



Not surprisingly, the pandemic has been top of mind for a large majority of communications pros. Three-quarters of those surveyed said they pay attention to news about COVID-19, while more than eight in 10 (83.2 percent) say that the coronavirus outbreak is a heavily discussed topic.

COVID-19 has also had a significant impact on the daily work of communications professionals. Roughly two out of three respondents (66.2 percent) said that the pandemic is relevant to their work, with nearly the same number (65.8 percent) noting that it had a direct impact on the daily work of their department or agency.

The effect of the pandemic was particularly noted by those who worked for public companies. Out of those professionals, 85.2 percent said that the pandemic was relevant to their work, and 76.5 thought that the pandemic affected their daily duties. Those numbers were significantly lower at consultancies and agencies, with 56.9 percent finding the pandemic relevant to their work, and 59 percent noting its direct impact.

A variety of other factors also affected the impact that the pandemic had on communication pros. Those between 40 and 49 seemed to be the most affected (with 70.9 percent finding the pandemic relevant to their daily work), while the impact was felt less among those under 29 (55 percent).

Those higher in the pecking order also said they felt the effects of the pandemic on their daily work most strongly, with CEOs and team leaders being more likely to mention that affect than were the team members working for them.

The study also asked respondents which sources they use most to find information about COVID-19. Public health organizations and officials were used by 72 percent, with national news outlets (69.2 percent) and local news outlets (61.9 percent) next on the list. At the bottom of the list were social influencers and bloggers (33.8 percent) and church or religious leaders (33.2 percent).

Public health organizations also ranked the highest when it came to trust, with 34.6 percent of those surveyed calling them the most trusted source. National news outlets were the most trusted source for 14.9 percent, with social media (8.1 percent) and local news outlets (6.9 percent) lagging behind.

## **NEVADA WANTS LATIN AMERICAN VISITORS**

The Nevada Division of Tourism plans to award a \$600K two-year PR contract to attract visitors from Mexico, Central and South America to the Silver State in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.



The potential partner must possess a strong understanding of working with Latin American travelers and tour agencies, as well as the US commercial services, chambers of commerce and international trade entities in key cities.

It may need to team with the state's local tourism partners in Las Vegas, Reno, Virginia City, Elko and Lake Tahoe.

The firm will organize FAM trips for tour operators to sell the Nevada product beyond Las Vegas and participate in trade shows in Latin American markets.

Travel Nevada requires ongoing outreach through press releases and other forms of communication to keep the state "on top of journalists' minds," according to the RFP.

The selected firm will engage consumers and travel trade press through appropriate social media channels and actively post information, offers and ideas regarding travel to Nevada.

Proposals are due July 6.

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## **PN'S HALEY MOVES TO METRO ATLANTA COC**

Porter Novelli's Dwayna Haley is joining the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce as chief brand and communications officer on July 26.



**Dwayna Haley**

She will guide MAC's positioning and marketing communications related to economic development and ecosystem expansion.

Haley will take charge of media relations, external & internal communications and responsibility for MAC's ChooseATL initiative that targets next-generation talent.

At Porter Novelli, Haley was most recently as executive VP and North American growth lead. Earlier, she was account director at MSLGroup and a member of Ketchum's consumer brand practice.

Haley will succeed Deisha Barnett, who took a job at UPS.

## **COALITION TO STOP FLU SIGNS LOBBYING FIRM**

Coalition to Stop Flu, an advocacy group dedicated to stopping flu deaths, has retained government relations firm LKB Strategies to lobby Capitol Hill on healthcare- and budget-related issues.

LKB, which is led by former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, will lobby on behalf of the Coalition on "Federal funding and policy issues related to seasonal and pandemic influenza," according to lobbying registration documents filed with Congress in June.

LKB President and Founder Lisa Bernhardt manages the account. Bernhardt was previously a staffer to the U.S. Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

Coalition to Stop Flu has spent \$60,000 in lobbying efforts so far this year, according to data from the Senate Office of Public Records.

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**Lou Hammond Group** lands **The Jackson County Tourism Development Authority**. LHG will be providing public relations/corporate communications, strategic planning, branding and digital marketing for the client. Situated in Western North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, Jackson County is home to the nation's first and only fly-fishing trail as well as miles of scenic hiking trails and waterfalls. The agency has also been engaged by **Sharbell Development Corporation**, a New Jersey-based real estate developer, and **Sycamore Brewing**, a Charlotte-based brewery that has been in operation since 2013.

**Marino** adds **New Settlement**, a Bronx-based organization that provides such community-based services as education, college



access, youth development, arts, workforce development and wellness, to its roster of nonprofit accounts. The firm will work to refresh the New Settlement brand with an emphasis on enhancing the communication of their services within the Bronx community. Marino has also been charged with strengthening the organization's digital presence through a tailored social media strategy.

**LDPR** is now working with the **Hyatt Centric Downtown Nashville** and **Hyatt Regency Boston/Cambridge**. The agency will manage the media relations programs for the properties—including media visits, communications writing and strategies, as well as select brand partnerships and collaborations. Hyatt Centric Downtown Nashville, located two blocks off of Nashville's Broadway, is set to open on July 29. Hyatt Regency Boston/Cambridge is undergoing a substantial renovation, and is set to debut in September.

**Bob Gold & Associates** adds **Commit USA**, a global technology services company specializing in custom software and IoT solutions. The agency will help drive awareness for Commit USA and support the company's expansion into North America. Founded in 2005, Commit has offices in New York, Israel and the Ukraine, working with clients in such sectors as fintech, medtech, martech and consumer goods. To date, the company has designed over 1,200 projects for more than 1,000 companies, ranging from small startups to global brands like IBM, Salesforce and Citi.

**PSC-PR** is named marketing and PR lead for **Wildflower**, a new restaurant operated by SVT Hospitality. PSC-PR is handling media relations for the July 1 Wildflower launch, including brand development, executive media interview/presentation training and messaging, as well as influencer engagement. Led by Chef Jonathan Shepard, who oversaw operations inside such New York City restaurants as Michelin-starred Le Coucou and Momofuku, Wildflower offers a menu that blends classic American fare with Dominican, Puerto Rican and Korean influences.



**Reach Global Marketing** of Toronto wins Canada PR duties of **Travel South USA**, the official destination marketing organization of southern state tourism offices. Reach is tasked with representing Travel South USA partner states and elevating TSUSA's Canadian presence through public relations, social media and influencer promotions, and strategic partnerships. "We know we need to strengthen our presence and enhance our strategy in preparation of the borders reopening and the shifts in consumer behavior," said Travel South USA president & CEO Liz Bittner.

# COMMENTARY



**Look for an exodus of PR people from Hong Kong** in the aftermath of the June 23 forced closure of *Apple Daily*, the free-wheeling pro-democracy tabloid, by the Chinese government.

PR thrives in an atmosphere that encourages debate and the lively exchange of free expression.

Hong Kong, which had a judicial system based on British law, served as a safe haven for PR people targeting mainland China.

Beijing's introduction of a draconian security law in Hong Kong on June 30, 2020 marked the beginning of the end of PR in the city.

The demise of *Apple Daily*, which was a thorn in the side of the communist government, seals the deal.

The US State Dept. on June 17 strongly condemned the arrest of five *Apple Daily* executives on trumped-up charges "of collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security."

Spokesperson Ned Price warned that killing media freedom and restricting the flow of information not only undermines democratic institutions but also hurts Hong Kong's credibility and viability as an international hub.

The *Financial Times* editorialized on June 23 that the *Apple Daily* shutdown will lead to self-censorship by other publications.

The Chinese government crackdown goes beyond journalism. A PR firm, for instance, could be skittish about taking on a client who criticizes Chinese policies or competes with state-owned companies. Why risk a hefty jail sentence?

Do PR people want to operate in a place that imprisons the freedom of ideas?

**Eric Adams is no friend of the press.** The Brooklyn borough president, who is leading the New York City Democratic mayoral primary contest, barred two reporters from his victory party held at a hotel in Williamsburg on June 22.

Ross Barkan and David Freedlander have written critically about the thin-skinned Adams.

Freedlander profiled Adams as the candidate of the "old political machine" in a piece for *New York*.

The Adams people claimed Barkan and Freedlander were denied entry to the ericadamsfornyc party because of space constraints.

However, New York One reporter Juan Benitez reported that there was a lot of available space at the inn.

Barkan blogged that he has never been banned from any kind of election party or campaign event.

In 2016, he covered election night parties in New Hampshire and Florida for president Trump, a guy who views the press as the "enemy of the people."

After being banned from Adams' party, Barkan and Freedlander covered Kathryn Garcia's election night event.

In NYC's new ranked voting set-up, Garcia still has a shot to become mayor.

I got my fingers crossed.

**Amazon faces the PR battle of its life** as the powerful International Brotherhood of Teamsters union declares Jeff Bezos' behemoth public enemy No. 1.

The Teamsters, the No. 1 union of warehouse and logistics workers, view Amazon's low wages and harsh working conditions as a threat to their superior pay and benefits, gained over the years via brass-knuckled collective bargaining.

Rather than organizing a union vote at Amazon warehouses, the Teamsters are opting for a PR strategy centered on protests, strikes and boycotts to hike the pressure on Amazon.

Randy Korgan, Teamsters' national director for Amazon, wrote in *Salon* that his union must engage members, forge strong community-labor alliances and integrate transformative social justice organizing into their work.

At their international convention on June 23, the Teamsters cited Amazon in urging the House Judiciary Committee to toughen antitrust laws.

Amazon, according to Teamsters general president Jimmy Hoffa, uses its dominant position in AWS, retail e-commerce and anticompetitive practices to become the dominant firm in the last-mile-delivery portion of the logistics industry.

"Amazon also abuses its market power in e-commerce to restrict third party sellers' options of last-mile delivery and logistics firms—and in the process is destroying middle-class jobs," he said.

**PR firms angling for a piece of Morgan Stanley's business** better have their pitch team drop by Walgreens for a COVID-19 shot before heading to the financial services giant's 1585 Broadway headquarters.

As of July 12, Morgan Stanley will ban any employee, client, vendor or visitor from its New York City and Westchester facilities who has not received the COVID-19 vaccine.

That dictum may rub the PR community the wrong way.

In an *O'Dwyer* poll that ran from June 5 through June 14, nearly six in ten (57 percent) of respondents said deciding to get the shot is a personal decision, not one that should be required by PR firm management.

An overwhelming majority of Morgan Stanley's staff in the metro New York is vaccinated, according to chief human resources officer Mandell Crawley.

It all comes down to what's good for the goose is good for the gander. If PR people dream of landing the golden goose (e.g., Morgan Stanley's PR), they better get the shots.

**The rich got richer.** Credit Suisse reports that the pandemic 2020 minted 5.2M millionaires, upping the global total to 56.1M.

The rampaging stock market, soaring residential property valuations and favorable government policies drove the growth of the rich.

Ninety percent of millionaires are worth less than \$5M. More than 215K have a net worth of more than \$50M.

Credit Suisse's report said, "the contrast between what has happened to household wealth and what is happening in the wider economy has never been more stark."

—Kevin McCauley